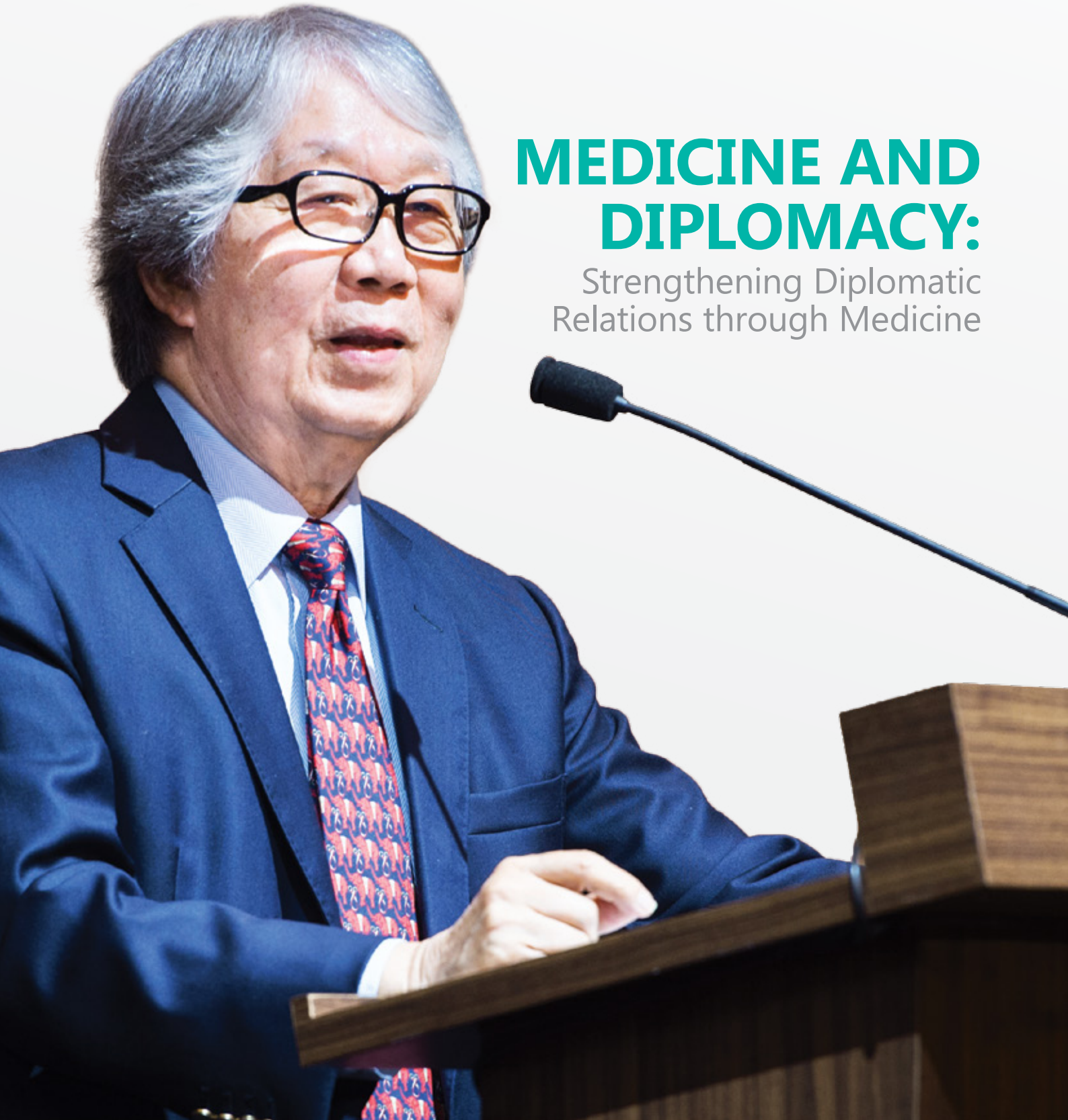


SMA NEWS



Vol. 47 No. 12 December 2015
MCI (P) 154/01/2015



MEDICINE AND DIPLOMACY:

Strengthening Diplomatic
Relations through Medicine

diplomacy

noun; di•plo•ma•cy / dɪˈplɒməsi /

The art of dealing with people in a sensitive and tactful way

This issue focuses on Medicine and Diplomacy. All of us could probably fill reams of pages with anecdotes of instances where we had to use the full force of our “diplomatic prowess” in our day-to-day work. Some of us do it better than others, that’s for sure. But diplomacy in medicine goes beyond nicely asking our colleague to do something for us, or smoothing out tensions between us and our patients, fellow healthcare professionals or the admin people upstairs.

Prof Tommy Koh summed it up aptly in the SMA Lecture given on 7 November 2015: “You can’t be a good doctor or a good diplomat if you don’t like people”. How else could we, whose very profession centres on the care of people, be doctors?

For those who missed the lecture, the full script of Prof Koh’s lecture on Medicine and Diplomacy, as well as the citation for Prof Koh delivered by Prof Cheah Jin Seng, can be found in this edition of the *SMA News*. On a related note, the President’s Forum by Dr Wong Tien Hua also touches on the reasons doctors should partake in providing humanitarian aid to the needy.

In Council News, Dr Daniel Lee reports on the World Medical Association meeting in Moscow, which focused on Medical Education. This issue also contains highlights of the well-received Medico-Legal Seminar on Mental Capacity held on 17 October 2015. Continuing with part 2 of his article on Family Medicine Clinics, Dr Leong Choon Kit makes a thoughtful argument on the need for GP super clinics and the current barriers our local healthcare system needs to overcome to make the concept a reality.

As part of our issue’s theme, we feature an opinion piece from an anonymous Patient X, who details his admission experience with delicate honesty – a key component of diplomacy, I must say. We also include a professionalism article by Dr Lee See Muah and Dr Seow Wan Tew, on informed disclosure by different healthcare providers.

This being the Christmas season, and to take our minds off the more serious topics, we feature an Indulge article by Dr Tan Su-Ming on her travels to Mongolia and a humorous guide to growing a medical beard by Dr Pinakin V Parekh. Read on to find out more.

I wish each and every one reading this issue a delightful Christmas and a wonderful 2016.



Dr Tina Tan is a psychiatry senior resident with National Healthcare Group. She obtained her medical degree from Duke-NUS Graduate Medical School (Class of 2011). She also has a bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Berkeley.

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